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American Art Galleries.*

V.

COLLECTION OF MR. JOHN WOLFE.

THERE is not a private house in America, perhaps (if we except some, like the late Louis Durr's, given up to the hoarding of suspicious old masters), which contains a collection looking so much like that of a European museum as the portion of Mr. Wolfe's residence dedicated to his larger specimens. They hang well crowded up, from the ceiling down—the great draperies of canvas, on which the eye makes out the contours and attitudes of life-sized figures; not one or two together, but a whole wall of them, and then, at right-angles, another wall similarly panelled. The huge gilded frames rise to the cornice like pilasters, rubbing their fretted edges, or parting with their external mouldings to bury themselves in a reserved space. The effect is like that of some corner of the Luxembourg Gallery. Other collectors are afraid of big pictures, and, in their interviews with Goupil or Petit, order talents of just three feet by two, or inspirations strictly confined to kitcat. This connoisseur has recognized that the beauty and value of a conception are occasionally dependent on its development. His Bonnat, his Cot, his Makart, his Bouguereau, each the expression of an artist at his best, are all ample pictures. Accordingly Mr. Wolfe's collection, though distributed through a mansion that does not contain a special gallery, conveys in an extraordinary degree the spacious sense that breathes through some "palace musée" of the Old World.

Mr. Wolfe belongs to the history of picture-collecting in America. He was one of the principal purchasers of the "Düsseldorf pictures"—a collection swept together in alarm after the German troubles of 1848, sent away eagerly and anxiously from the studios in the fear of revolution, and finally brought to America on speculation through the audacity of a gentleman quite unacquainted with art, the New York merchant, Mr. Boker. This collection, exhibited in Dr. Chapin's old church on Broadway, formed the æsthetic fashion of the day, and the belles of those remote times before Madison Avenue was "swell" were in the habit of wondering, between two waltzes, "how long it took Mr. Düsseldorf to paint so many pictures." The subject of this article became the purchaser of many of the Düsseldorf canvases, and afterward took pains to cultivate in Europe the acquaintance of the German and Belgian painters whose works he had acquired. These predilections gave a strong Teutonic twang to the original collection of Mr. Wolfe. The Hasenclevers, the Meyerheims, the De Keyzers, the Radels, the Greutznern, and the works of Knaus and Karl Becker formed the keynote of the gallery, and in the case of a few selected masterpieces still give it character, and have culminated in the acquisition of the principal Piloty in this country, the "Henry VIII. and Anne Boleyn," a subject chosen by Mr. Wolfe and executed to his order. A little later, when Everard brought to this country his first unappreciated collection of English pictures, and visitors went to stare at the monstrous tableaux of "Henry V. Crowning Himself" and the "Death of Harold," or to inspect through a lens Holman Hunt's miniatures of the "Eve of St. Agnes" or the "Light of the World," Mr. Wolfe, as a buyer whom dealers could depend on, was successfully applied to for the easement of a part of the importer's load. This collector, then, before the civil war, was the owner of a unique American gallery, including such conspicuous gems as Couture's "Day-Dreams," Holman Hunt's "Light of the World," Meissonier's "Smoker," Leslie's "Anne Page and Slender," Frère's "Evening Prayer,"

and Hasenclever's "New Pupil." All of the pictures mentioned are now the delight of other owners, the Wolfe collection of that day having been scattered in 1863 or 1864, in a sale that made a sensation at the time.

The more select names of Bonnat, Stevens, Lefebvre, Madrazo, Vollon, Munkácsy, Cabanel, and Breton are now signed upon the pictures holding the place of honor, and the Hasenclevers and Meyerheims, with their bibulous or gormandizing subjects, are relegated to the dinner-room.

The Bonnat is probably the finest specimen known to private collections. It has the statuesque emphasis and relief of his "Le Christ," and the ethnographic analysis of his more familiar peasant subjects. The topic is a "Fellah Woman" carrying her babe, a group studied from life in Egypt at the time when Bonnat attended the ceremonies of opening the Suez Canal. The black,

"à la tache" and busy themselves only to get each facet of surface at its exact and proper distance from the spectator's eye, as distinguished from those who work especially for outlines, and would make a figure a transparent and flimsy diagram of contours—the conscientious academy-worker will best understand this distinction. At the same time the painter borrows from the art of modelling a series of effects proper to that craft, and elaborates his forms with an aggressive solidity, so pure and detached that the eye checks at every boss, sinks into every cavity, and feels like passing completely around and behind the object. The leg of the infant riding easily on the mother's shoulder might be especially pointed out as a lesson in the science of design, round as terracotta sculpture, firm and vibratory as a bar of projecting steel, tough as the remainder leather "left in the pit when the tanner died," and at the same time alive with

tendons, muscle-fibre, and bones. Even Ribera has not carried further the illusion of making so many inches of flat paint look like a rounded and relieved object, while this piece of work avoids his helpful trick of raising the salient surfaces by means of sharp high-lights. Again, the robe of the woman, a dark-blue curtain of burly folds that rumple into rippled creases over their large laps and flutings, is designed with monumental firmness. This simple vision of coarse cotton stuff—a notion of texture the artist has derived from some original long since made up into paper—is as solid to the sense as any fireproof door. Would it yield, you wonder, at a fire or a demolition, or would it not rather survive from the inherent virtue of the idea that is in it, as the warped copper legs of the Vatican Hercules have kept their sheeted strength through the changes of war and time? M. Bonnat has made the world richer with a picture that has no piquancy of subject or anecdote, but which seems to extend the possible boundaries of the art of painting.

Alongside is the picture of "Fellah Women" by Makart, awarded a gold medal at the Vienna Exhibition of 1876. The problem in the artist's mind was so different from the last, that it seems cruel to insist on any comparison. This is a problem of grace and "tone." "Tone," said an intellectual poetry-reading artist to us contemptuously the other day, "tone is simply bitume." He went on to explain how a crude picture, painted narratively perhaps in the English style, with an eye for expressions of faces and selection of types, became instantly a work of "tone" by the simple expedient of being "frotté de bitume." Before, it was a raw scheme of color, without any surface; now, it is a thing of tenderness, depth, and harmony, a jewel for the æsthetic to sigh over; and the secret is just "bitume." By this cheap and royal way of getting at artistic distinction, Makart has arrived at a work of tone. Two Egyptian women stand by a fountain, with large jars, one stooping and looking up at the other, who balances a jar on her head, and accommodates in the crook of her elbow a little thumb-sucking picaninny with ophthalmic eyes. Beside the Bonnat, these figures look like thin bas-reliefs in a sheet of gelatine; the reality, the impenetrability of matter is wanting. And in the



DESIGN FOR A PANEL FOR A CIRCULAR TABLE. BY F. DIELMAN.

DRAWN BY THE ARTIST FOR THE ART AMATEUR.

heavy air of an Egyptian twilight closes round the lonely mother, who stands among the heavy exhalations of the Nile, darker than they, with downcast lethargic eyes. Her baby, a little naked frog-like animal, curls around her shoulders, dangling his beaded toes over her breast, and curling his lean arms around her forehead, on which he drops his heavy head in slumber. Neither of them expects anything or has any hope. The woman is strong and of savage symmetry, with the inattentive placidity of a granite Memnon that has long since ceased to sing. In technical execution the group has a final and masterly expression, and the brush seems to have worked with the grand cutting strokes of a Michael Angelo chisel, satisfied and sure that when the definitive blow was given there was nothing more to be said and no more labor to be done. The modelling and planes are understood with the realism of those artists who work

great desideratum of tone, though the Bonnat may be granted to be rather opaque and blackish, the Vienna painter's research for air and transparency is plainly a recipe of "bitume." Bitume makes the softness of these dark skins; bitume makes the air which clusters in deeper and deeper shadows toward the corners; bitume makes the niche of rocks in which the women stand. A clever master of temporary illusions though he be, Makart makes for his groups an effect of theatre-lights like nothing in nature, and his types are actresses and actors, idealized out of all naturalness by the theatrical idealization of painting-up and costuming and posing. The Tableau Makart can represent—the Picture, never.

The Bouguereau in the Wolfe collection is so unexpectedly fine, that one is tempted to drop the lance which habitual prejudice puts into the hand of anybody who is taken up to admire a Bouguereau. It is the "Nymphs

and Faun." Four or five life-size women of the woods have caught a goat-faced satyr at a disadvantage, and are pulling him into the water by the arms, the ears, and the horns. Here are forms of real rounded relief and precipitate action, a wonderful achievement for Bouguereau; here are real, windy, balancing trees to form a dark relief for them; the whole combination of life and spirit being so striking that the eye, in high good-humor, is ready to bear witness that the skins of the people are really palpitating and compressible in this case—not Bouguereau parchments scraped down with a razor. The foremost woman is particularly well designed; she really seems to be moving spiritedly away from the spectator, as her polished back leans toiling toward the victim she has seized, her elastic feet grasp the bank along which she climbs, and the light, attracted and cajoled by the long wedge of tempting white flesh, slides gayly down to the eye along the ivory incline of her form, from the head that leans into the background, over the slippery back of her limbs with their rounded straining muscles. The trouble with the picture is that the people are ladies, not Mænads or Bacchantes. Their undressing is accidental or prurient, not ignorant. Look at any of their faces, and you feel that they need not insult your reason by pretending not to know how to write modern French and read the fashion-newspapers.

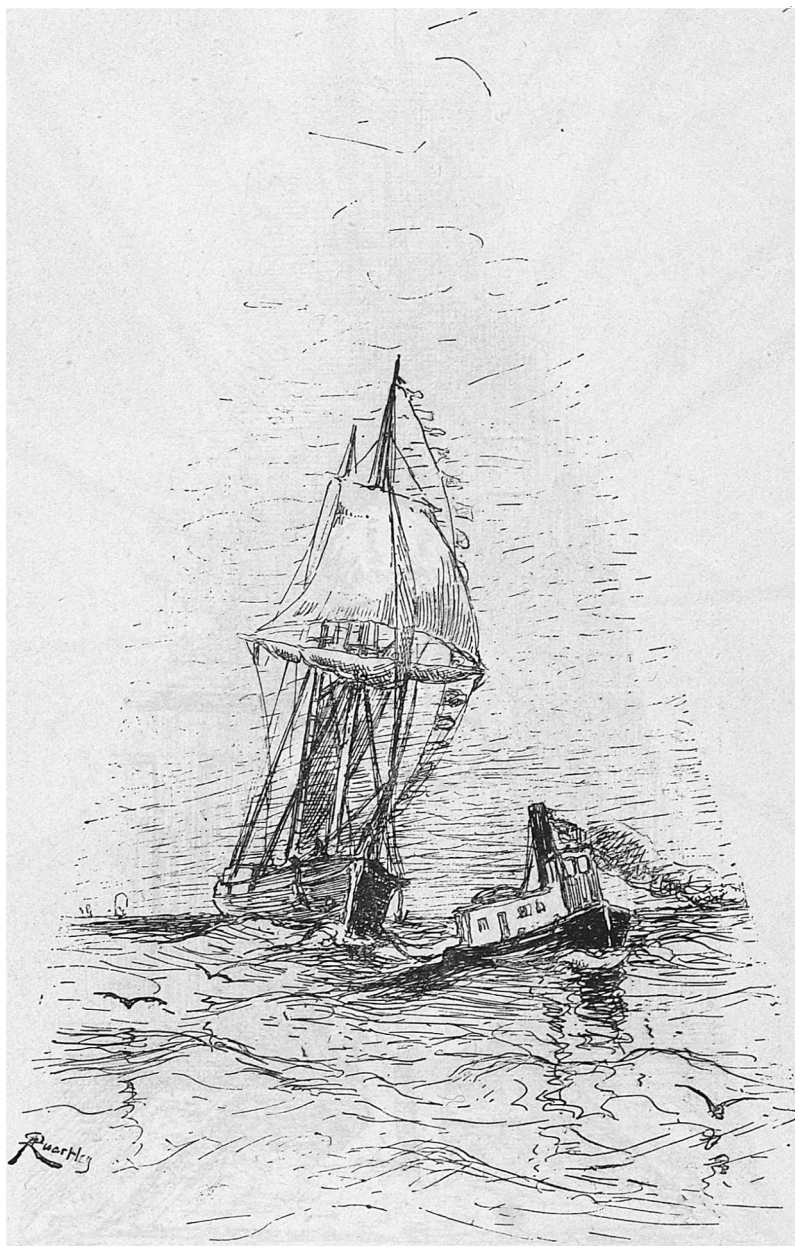
Cot's "Springtime" hangs beside. It is a life-size boy and girl, in the most dangerous and inflammable of the teens, dangling in a swing among the trees of some Greek garden. A bold plunge into antiquity and primitive idyl, combined with a truly modern French consciousness of the philosophy of voluptuousness, have made the fortune of pictures like this and like Gérôme's "Cock-fight." This revelling pair of children, drunken with first passion, are not really Greek—the whole budget of Tanagra statuettes, with their demureness and modesty of discreet love, rises in the mind to forbid the thought; but they are not quite modern, for they have escaped our awkwardness and hobbledehoyhood. The cunning eagerness with which the maid looks right into the boy's eyes is modern in meaning and antique in dress; hence the acceptability of this Arcadian idyl, peppered with French spice. The painter is from the South of France, ardent, young, rude, and uncultured. When he had prepared the picture, he wanted a title or a text of scholarly distinction. His own reading not furnishing him with anything very novel, he applied to a friend, Dr. Soulagès, the electrician, of New York; and this auxiliary was able to come to the rescue with that pretty Italian couplet now always quoted with the picture:

"O primavera, gioventù del anno!
O gioventù, primavera della vita!"

The four large pictures above described are those which, hanging together, particularly give to one of the rooms the spacious air of a European governmental collection. But there are other canvases of monumental size hung as centres in various chambers of the mansion, or lending their emphasis to walls begemmed with miniature work. Thus Cabanel's "Venus" is the decoration of a favored space, above a range of bronze statuary whereamong shines Clésinger's restoration of the Parthenon "Fates." The "Venus" has been three times repeated by Cabanel. The large life-size original, seen at the 1867 Exposition, was the Emperor's private property; the present example, a little smaller, was painted to Mr. Wolfe's order; and another, still somewhat less in size and of paler colors, is in the Philadelphia collection of Mr. Gibson. It is a subject where love is treated in a purely amusing and pleasure-seeking manner, without an idea of the antique seriousness. The goddess is just born, and lies undulating upon the foam, stretching and half-opening her long dazzled eyes, which she shades with her arm. Five Cupids, little winged puddings most unconsciously drawn, fly around her head, awakening her with their whispers of adoration, or playing upon conch-shells. The ambition of Cabanel in this picture was hardly more grave than

that of a Boucher or a Fragonard. The form of his personage suffers from bonelessness; but Bonnat himself could perhaps not give much anatomical definition in a scheme of intentionally blond tones, where the deepest shadow is itself a light. The buoyancy with which the Venus floats, the irresponsible innocence of her mischief, and to some extent the success of modelling in a gamut of very high values, constitute the merit of the picture, which however is willingly left by the critic to the admiration of the sentimental and easily-pleased multitude. A family portrait, also by Cabanel, is found among the canvases of the collection, an achievement of two short sittings, and a spirited piece of sketching with the brush.

There are at least a hundred and fifty pictures in this collection, and it will require another paper, under the most illiberal construction of justice. CICERONE.



DESIGN FOR A PANEL FOR A CIRCULAR TABLE. BY A. QUARTLEY.

DRAWN BY THE ARTIST FOR THE ART AMATEUR.

THE recent sale of the Walferdin collection caused considerable interest among "connoisseurs" and dealers in Paris. The paintings by Fragonard, which formed the chief feature of the sale, fetched high prices. Two decorative works, painted by him for Mme. du Barry, were warmly contested, and sold for 30,000 francs. "Les Amants heureux," one of the most admired works in the collection, sold for 20,000 francs; "L'Etable," for 15,000 francs; "Le Début du Modèle," for 15,000 francs; and "Le Vœu de l'Amour," for 10,000 francs. The two busts by Houdon, of Mirabeau, one in terra-cotta and the other in marble, were bought for 8000 francs.

A CHARMING little replica by Lefebvre of his "Truth" was bought recently for Moore & Curtis at the sale of the Boulanger collection of pictures in Paris.

BOSTON CORRESPONDENCE.

THE GILBERT STUART COLLECTION—DR. RIMMER'S ART WORK—OPENING OF THE ST. BOTOLPH CLUB.

BOSTON, May 19, 1880.

THIS has been a fortunate fortnight for art here. The exhibition of Gilbert Stuart's portraits, the memorial collection of the lamented Dr. Rimmer's unique achievements—these exhibitions both at the Museum of Fine Arts—and the opening of the St. Botolph Club have kept the local world of amateurs and connoisseurs in a continual state of pleasurable excitement. The collection of the genial Stuart's family portraits does not by any means pretend to be exhaustive. It is a large display to see together of works by the hand of a single painter.

But it numbers less than a hundred pieces, while the catalogue in its appendix gives a list of nearly three times as many more known to be in existence. The first thing that is forced upon the mind by this aggregation of a single man's work is not an impression of monotony or mannerism, but of brilliant variety. There are as many different scales of tones and styles of "texture" for skin and complexion as there are different sitters depicted. The subjects are painted in all possible variations of costume and head dress. Stuart was, evidently from this, a painter who liked to escape from the conventional pose and parade dress of the portrait as often as the subject and "the relatives and friends" would permit. When the costume has accorded with his artistic fancy he has painted it with unction—even "lovingly," say that it has been a fall of rare lace or a short-waisted satin dress of the mode of the Directory (still lingering into Stuart's day), anything whose beauty had been borrowed from the ages and still certifies to the immortality of true artistic grace. But there are admirals in gold lace, soldiers in "brilliant" uniform, a prelate in his purple and lace, a college president in his robes, patriots in their perukes, old ladies with voluminous caps and frills, languishing beauties with their new red shawls draped upon their shoulders, and the reigning belles of the period, still "drawing by a single hair" of the curls drooping with artful negligence down over their conscious eyes. Nobody ever painted character with more shrewdness and vividness than Stuart, either from sympathy, or admiration, or humor, or mischievousness, or vindictiveness—for he had a temper, and his wife sometimes felt the weight of his hand in corporal chastisement we are told—he had a way of painting out his sitters even to their innermost foibles. One can read with perfect ease and confidence, in the tales told in the lineaments of the departed "noblesse" embalmed by this painter of American aristocracy, the qualities through which the respective subjects arrived at the fortune and dignity of having their likenesses taken by Stuart. In this one it was plainly the divine right of long descent, serenely established and undisturbed by any misfortune as yet befallen.

In that one the requisite means and social standing had come only after a manful struggle, the traces of which are still discernible in the aggressive stress of resolution and the manifest determination to maintain itself at all hazards against any odds proclaimed in a challenging pursing of the lips. In another the crowning honor has evidently been reached only after carking calculation that has left its anxiety and stealthy preparation upon the visage. In another it has come unconsciously and uncared for, as the mere incident of a nobly-lived life of generous, public-spirited effort.

In this one it has arrived only after the ambition has been satisfied, and everything of this world seems of little worth compared with the life within and beyond, upon which the calm contemplation of these far-away-looking-thoughtful eyes are fixed. In the cases of most of the ladies, especially of the proud matrons of famous fam-

ilies, it is but too evidently the event of their lives, and they are still bridling complacently three quarters of a century beyond their tombs. The "poetess" of the day, now in oblivion, still turns on us the restless, applause-seeking gleam in her eye. The famed beauty of the hour still shoots her ensnaring, meaning glance with obvious intent to wound and enslave if not destroy. But the plain good mothers and dutiful daughters, with no thought or care for the gaze of any but those they love, are writ down with equal clearness in all their innocence, amiability, and single-mindedness. Stuart knew how to do everything that could be done with paint on canvas. His subtlety is sometimes startling, so intimate is the revelation it makes of the inner as well as the outward peculiarities and characteristics of his sitters. One patriot in wig and knee-breeches has been painted terribly cross-eyed; others have their moral squints as pitilessly perpetuated. Washington is given a prosaic setting-forth in one important canvas, that is a sad revealing of the commonplace, not to say stolid side of the good man's nature. It is not the accepted ideal of Pater Patriæ, but it is the work of the same hand that gave us that immortal familiar ideal—possibly made on some day when the wind was east with either sitter or artist or both. The general Washingtonian cast of the features is there, but the nose is thick, the eyes are small, and the mouth and whole face expressionless, while the complexion is of a blowed brick color. Anybody who has fancied that Stuart's color was of conventional rosiness and pink and white monotony will quickly discover his mistake in the presence of these four or five score of examples. The variety of his color for flesh is only rivalled by its sweetness and mellowness, and the brightness and purity which it has preserved. Every question of technique is anticipated and fully met, and the smartest of our young painters must sit in humility before these portraits of an American of three generations ago.

The late Dr. William Rimmer, lecturer on art anatomy at the Museum School of Drawing and Painting, died last August, within a week or two of the death of William M. Hunt. They were close friends, so confidentially intimate and mutually faithful, that Hunt applied to Rimmer to draw the outlines of the figures of his frescoes at the Albany Capitol, but Dr. Rimmer was already stricken with the nervous prostration to which he finally succumbed, and could do no more than correct the anatomy of Hunt's sketches for the frescoes. Rimmer was known to the public chiefly as a lecturer and instructor (having served in that capacity in the Lowell Institute of this city and in the Cooper Institute at New York), and also as a sculptor. But this memorial collection of his works shows him to have been a painter as well. His extreme sensitiveness did not permit him to exhibit much of his work or to finish or even to undertake it for exhibition. His most wonderful work was done on the blackboard before his classes. There drawings of the most perfect anatomical truth and oftentimes sublime artistic suggestiveness were thrown off with amazing ease and rapidity, only to be quickly erased to give place to something else. But here are many of his more elaborated studies and a score of paintings, besides his most famous pieces of sculpture. The paintings show an aspiring aim to emulate the perfections of the old masters, not only in drawing and in chiaroscuro, but also in elevation of subject and treatment. Apparently if there was anything he cared more for than grandeur and dignity, it was intensity. His picture of a Roman Gladiator, standing, or crouching rather, with every nerve strung, to meet a lion which advances raging upon him, is fairly terrible with the suspense of the impending collision. Another picture suggestive of terrific effort is that representing a soldier assassin fleeing through the vaulted halls of some ancient palace pursued abreast in another and inner range of halls by another flying figure, which evidently hangs to

the first like his shadow. The "interest" in these pictured dramas is so intense as to leave almost a painful sensation, so eager is the mind to reach the issue of the contest. Gérôme might have been proud to claim the execution of these two pictures. But Dr. Rimmer loved better to picture the gods and heroes of the classic age, and the sumptuously framed and fleshed women for whom they contended. The mighty thews and claws and jaws of lions and tigers in combat also attracted his Herculean strength, and the weird semi-human monsters of mythologic lore gave congenial range and scope for his love of the marvellous, the perfect, the mighty and the intense. In sculpture his great work was the "Falling Gladiator," which in Paris was considered impossible of execution without a model, so perfect were its details. Yet when the artists tried to pose a model in that very crisis of a heavy full-length

tion, owing to his retiring disposition and his unpromising manliness of character. But he had the highest faith in himself, and dared to utter adverse criticisms on Michael Angelo, and rate the whole array of modern and contemporary artists as of little worth or promise.

The St. Botolph Club has at last opened its doors to its members, who are supposed to represent the cream of the literati and artists of this region. Certainly the art gallery was hung for the occasion with the most brilliant collection of paintings ever gathered here out of contemporary American art. It is true New York artists contribute pieces of the highest lustre, but the Boston contingent are not far behind. Mr. Chase's portrait of General Webb and Mr. Sargent's of Duran are the two key-pieces, and J. G. Brown, Ryder, Bunce, Shirlaw, Weir, Sartain, Twachtman and Quartley send of their very best. But Foxcroft Cole, Fuller, Johnston, Vinton, Gauguin, Selinger, Wasson, Millet, Waterman, Enneking, Oudinot, Langerfeldt, Bartlett the sculptor, and others, hold Boston's own very well. The secret of the brilliant high tone of the display is that a standard of selection was adopted and adhered to. The new gallery is a beautiful one and does the pictures good, and the entire house gives great satisfaction to the members of this Boston Century. You may expect to see the odd but imposing and finely significant name of St. Botolph's making something of a figure in art matters here in future.

GRETA.

SAN FRANCISCO CORRESPONDENCE

ELIHU VEDDER'S "THREE PHORCYDES"
AND "BIRTH OF SPRING"—YELLAND'S
"BAY OF SAN FRANCISCO."

SAN FRANCISCO, May 6, 1880.

As Elihu Vedder has returned to his own country, at least temporarily, and exhibited his pictures in New York and Boston, where their peculiar merits have excited much complimentary comment, it may interest the readers of THE ART AMATEUR to hear of two of his works that found their way to this distant city direct from the artist's studio in Rome, where the lady to whom they belong talked over with Mr. Vedder the subjects she wished treated. When the pictures arrived here, a year or so ago, the owner gave an art reception, at which they were shown to friends and members generally of the painting fraternity. Opinions were divided as to their beauty, the mythical, weird subject of one not being such as to please the ordinary picture amateur, but it is the one which Mr. Vedder himself preferred, and which he evidently painted "con amore." The name of this largest of the pictures is "The Three Phorcydes," though a more strictly accurate title would be, probably, "The Three Graiæ." "These ancient sisters three," guardians of the Gorgons, were the daughters of Phorcys, and had between them but one eye, which "they pass from hand to hand." They are thus described by that charming "idle singer of an empty day," William Morris:

"There sat the crones that had the single eye,
Clad in blue sweeping cloak and snow-white gown;
While o'er their backs their straight white hair hung down
In long thin locks; dreadful their faces were,
Carved all about with wrinkles of despair;
And as they sat they crooned a dreary song,
Complaining that their lives should last so long,
In that sad place where no one came anear,
In that wan place desert of hope and fear;
And singing still they rocked their bodies bent,
And ever each to each the eye they sent."

Mr. Vedder widely departs from this delineation, which presents to our minds old shrivelled beldames in a gloomy hall. He has drawn on his own vivid imagination, and, to use his own expression, has "painted them as he first met them in his dreams." Three women in the prime of life, of Oriental cast of feature, terrible, weird, inhuman figures, and yet with an ex-



DESIGN FOR A PANEL FOR A CIRCULAR TABLE. BY J. D. SMILLIE.

DRAWN BY THE ARTIST FOR THE ART AMATEUR.

fall they found it could not be done. Had Dr. Rimmer made this statue a little above life-size, instead of precisely that, he would have gained the prize which all agreed its merits deserved. The fact comes out now that this statue was built up from the first conception of the muscles of a man's shoulder and arm as they would be in falling, and that it was executed entirely without a model. Dr. Rimmer's head of St. Stephen, an anguished, piteous, upward-looking face in granite, has also been enthusiastically praised in Europe, and was given a place in the Royal Gallery at Munich. It was not till Dr. Rimmer had practised sixteen years, very successfully, as a country doctor that he discovered that art was his true field. He was born in Boston in 1816, but settled at Quincy, and it was in the granite quarries there that he first imbibed his irresistible impulse toward sculpture and art. He had but scant apprecia-

pression of hopelessness only possible to the human creature. Partially clothed in dull blue drapery, the ends of which flutter in the wind and half mingle with their colorless hair, which appears almost to writhe as though "alive," they stand in the midst of a barren sandy landscape by the sea-shore. Evidently they approach for the first time the border of Neptune's great kingdom. The central figure is in possession of the eye, and stands as though petrified with astonishment and awe, *seeing* the water, and apparently listening to the roar of the ocean, while repulsing the sister on the right, who has seized her arm and clutches for the eye in terror, as her bare foot on the sand is touched by the cold wave which has broken and is curling up the beach; the other foot actually clings to the flat rock on which they partly stand, the whole attitude being powerfully expressive of fear of this unknown element which she feels and hears without being able to see. The middle sister with the eye has raised her left arm—the foreshortening of which is fine—as though to ward off the one forming the left of the group, who, also blind and as yet untouched by the water, is conscious of the approach to an unfamiliar scene, and instinctively grasps for the eye. The three women are alike in size, form, color, feature, in all save expression, this sameness of appearance adding much to the uncanniness of the creation, but emphasizing appropriately the idea of sisterhood desired to be conveyed. Besides this repetition of one in three, this unity of feature was required by the fact that one eye must fit each face. On reflection nothing could well be stranger than three women exactly alike, the differences being merely the variety which would be yielded by one person under the influence of different emotions and in diverse attitudes, which variety has been clearly portrayed by Mr. Vedder. The drawing of the figures is perfect, and you shudder as you almost feel the cold wind that rudely plays with their hair and garments. The spectator cannot fail to enter into the strange atmosphere of the whole conception.

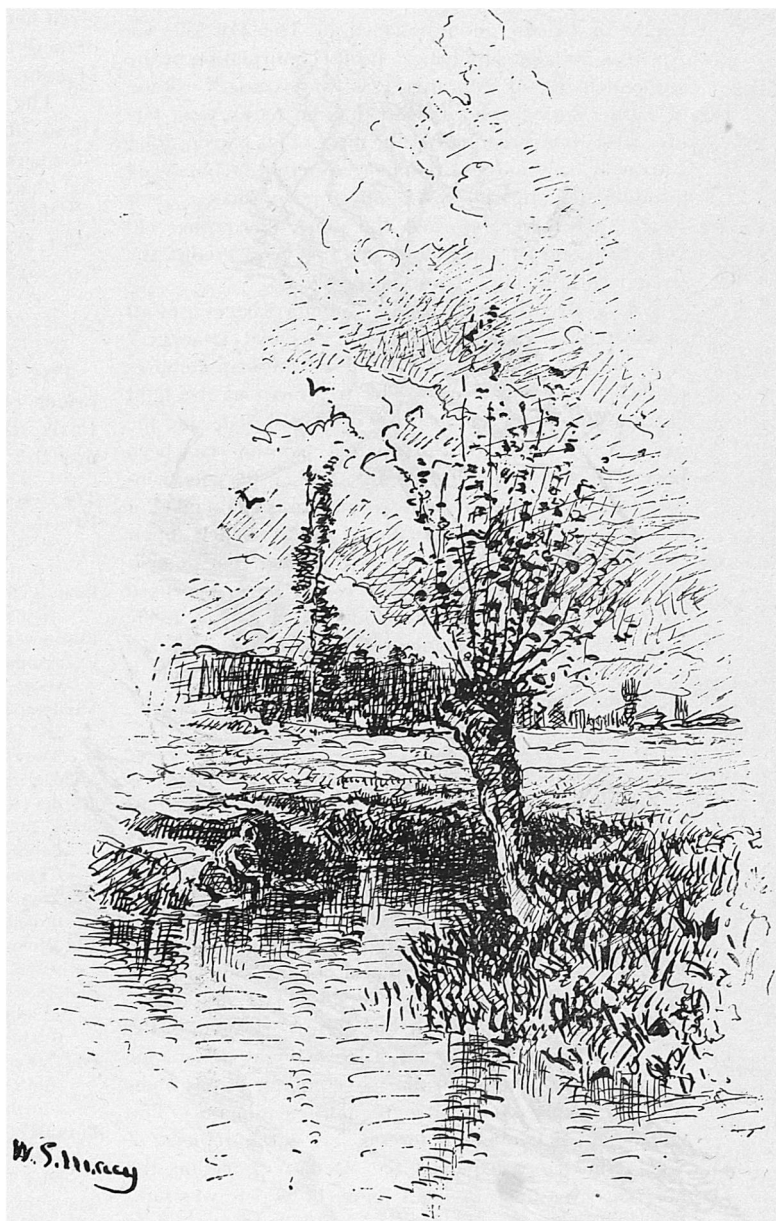
Mr. Vedder's smaller picture is called the "Birth of Spring," and is a complete contrast in spirit to the painting just described. A lightly-draped female figure, floating in the air, is appearing on the rays of the sun. At her approach, and by her touch, the ice melts, trees spring into leaf and flower, buds burst, and all nature puts on her most beautiful attire. A very pretty poetic fancy, but I should say not as much after the artist's heart as the other stronger works.

A California artist, R. D. Yelland, has just finished for a private order a view of the "Bay of San Francisco," which is the best treatment of the subject that has yet been achieved here. It may be thought that to paint the bay on the shores of which a painter lives, and which he can see and study at all times, should be no very difficult feat. However that may be, although several of our local geniuses have attempted scenes more or less panoramic and pretentious, we have generally been disappointed at the results. A topographical picture is always more or less hampering to an artist, and one which—as in a case like this where so much ground or water is expected to be included—renders a good draughtsman nervous. Mr. Yelland has combined most happily views of the city and the Golden Gate in a canvas twenty-four by sixty inches. His point of view is the southern side of Goat Island, the hour sunset, so that he gives us a picture familiar to all, and one which has been an impressive sight to many an overland passenger who—before the hour of arrival was changed—just caught a glimpse of the Golden Gate as he crossed about five in the afternoon from Oakland to San Francisco. Excluding Alcatraz Island from his range of vision, Mr. Yelland has made the glorious distant "Heads" the motive of his picture; over the nearer, but not too obtrusive city, he has thrown a glow of rosy light, and in the right foreground he has given us a bit of Goat Island, which shows rock and beach painting not easily surpassed.

YERBA BUENA.

THE electric light is being used again at the French Salon this season. The jury of painting protested that it is too unequal and glaring, but the protest came too late, for the Government had signed an agreement with the patentees which binds them to a second experiment. Such modifications, however, are being tried as using yellow globes and altering the disposition of the candles. The result will be watched with interest in this country, where the use of the electric light in certain picture galleries has been seriously considered.

A YOUNG American artist, Miss Marian Lois Wright, has the rare good fortune this year of being an exhibitor in the Paris Salon, and the Royal Academy, London. Her picture in the Salon, a Venetian gondolier, has a good place and is praised by the critics.



DESIGN FOR A PANEL FOR A CIRCULAR TABLE. BY W. S. MACY.

DRAWN BY THE ARTIST FOR THE ART AMATEUR.

Miss Wright is a pupil of Robert Fleury, is only eighteen years old, and begins her career as an artist with high promise of future excellence.

MORE than fifty French artists have signed the roll of a new club in New York, to be called "Cercle Artistique Français." The club-house is to be opened in September, and will probably be in Lexington or Madison Avenue. Only artists of recognized standing, who speak or understand French, will be eligible for membership. Lyric and dramatic artists, as well as painters, are included. The officers elected for the first year are W. Barbe, president; E. Frerot, vice-president; E. Rondel, jun., secretary; and J. Tuourmoux, treasurer. There is material in New York for a strong organization of this kind, and we wish the "Cercle" success.

The Print Collector.

SALE OF PRINTS AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

AN interesting auction sale took place recently at the British Museum of a collection of duplicate prints and etchings, eighty-eight in number, which were sold by the trustees in order to raise funds for the purchase of the Crace collection of views of Old London, well known from having been exhibited at Kensington. The collection was particularly rich in the early Italian engravers, and in the etchers of the Dutch school. Three etchings of Berghem realized £88; a brilliant impression of the first stage of "The Cow Drinking" produced £54. Two magnificent Hollars, "Antwerp Cathedral" and the "Royal Exchange," both first states, produced £57. Vandyke's etchings were represented but scantily. An early state of the likeness of the celebrated engraver, Paul Potter, which was afterward ruined by the engraver, realized £52, being purchased by Mr. Thibaudeau.

Of the works of Mair von Landshut, "The Adoration of the Magi," a fine impression, brought £47; and the print entitled "A Young Lady receiving a Gentleman at the Door of a Gothic Mansion," £34. By Israel van Meckenen there were "The High Priest refusing the Offering of Joachim," £30; "The Virgin, St. Anne, St. Catharine, and St. Barbara," £30, and two or three others. By Paul Potter, "Le Berger," with the address of Clément de Jonghe, fetched £24; and the "Head of a Cow," a rare work, £25—both high prices for the prints of Paul Potter. Marc Antonio was unrepresented, but by a member of his school there was the "Venus and Cupid accompanied by Pallas," from the centre groups of the well-known "Judgment of Paris," by Marc Antonio Raimondi, £35.

Lukas van Leyden's portrait of the Emperor Maximilian was, after a spirited competition, knocked down to Mr. Nosedo for £80; but the Rembrandt etchings were the great attraction of the sale, being all early states and most splendid impressions. Of Rembrandt's own portrait—that one in which he is shown leaning on a stone window-sill—there were two examples, one in the first state, which produced £116, and another in the second, which realized £27. By the ordinary observer the latter would have been even preferred, but to a collector early states are of almost priceless value. "The Goldweigher," by the same artist, produced £124; "Abraham entertaining the Three Angels," £27; the "Rest in Egypt," £27; the "Baptism of the Eunuch," £11; the "View of Amsterdam," a fine impression, £34; the "Goldweigher's Field," a warmly toned impression, £40; "Dr. Faustus," a brilliant impression, £44; "Clément de Jonghe," third state, after the first changes in the plate, £16—a fine impression of that rather late state, and the "Great Jewish Bride," a fourth state, £50. All the Rembrandts sold at higher prices than usual, the wonderful copies of

the earliest states by Armand Durand appearing to have increased rather than lessened the value of the originals.

Among the works of the engravers of the early German school, "The Crucifixion," by Martin Schöngauer, a good impression, realized £72, and "The Virgin" £60. By Adriaan van de Velde, a brilliant impression of the "Cow and Two Sheep at the Foot of a Tree," fetched £10. Among the works of Jacob Walch, there occurred the "Judith" £21, and a brilliant impression of the "Three Men tied to a Tree," £38. By Johann Waechtlin, of Strasburg, the three-colored print of "Orpheus playing to the Animals," sold for £46. It is stated to have been bought for the Berlin Museum.

Of modern prints the examples were very few. A magnificent proof of the mezzotint of "Miss Jacobs" by